

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DUBLIN 00855 01 OF 02 131320Z
ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 00855

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TAGS: PINS, PINT, PEPR, EI, UK
SUBJECT: INCREASING TENSIONS IN ANGLO IRISH RELATIONS -
PART TWO.
REF: (A) BELFAST 47, (B) DUBLIN 457, (C) 820
(D) DUBLIN 851

1. ON MARCH 9 THE GOI FONOFF TOOK THE RELATIVELY UNUSUAL
STEP OF SUMMONING ALL RESIDENT AMBASSADORS (EXCEPT THE
BRITISH) TO A BRIEFING WHICH GOI THOUGHT "NECESSARY BECAUSE
OF HIGH-LEVEL COMMENTS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS". THE
REFERENCE WAS TO NORTHERN IRELAND SECRETARY ROY MASON'S
COMMENTS IN PARLIAMENT MARCH 6 CONCERNING BORDER SECURITY
BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC AND N.I. AFTER DISTRIBUTING THE
HANSARD 114 COLUMNS OF MASON'S STATEMENTS, ASSISTANT
SECRETARY SEAN DONLON SAID FIVE OF MASON'S POINTS "GAVE
THE GOI DIFFICULTY".

2. FIRST, MASON HAD INTIMATED THAT THE "LA MON BOMBERS"
COULD EASILY HAVE ESCAPED ACROSS THE BORDER (INTO THE
REPUBLIC) -- A REFERENCE TO THE RECENT BOMBING BY THE IRA
OF A HOTEL WHICH KILLED TWELVE AND INJURED SCORES. DONLON
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PAGE 02 DUBLIN 00855 01 OF 02 131320Z

SAID THAT DESPITE FREQUENT CONTACT WITH THE POLICE IN THE
NORTH AND THE GOI'S ACTIVELY SEEKING EVIDENCE THAT WOULD
HELP IN APPREHENDING THE BOMBERS IF THEY WERE IN THE
SOUTH, NOT A SHRED OF SUCH EVIDENCE WAS FORTHCOMING FROM
THE NORTHERN POLICE.

3. SECOND, MASON HAD SUGGESTED THAT IRA UNITS MADE

REGULAR FORAYS INTO THE NORTH, ATTACKING SECURITY FORCES THERE, THEN RETIRING TO THE SOUTH. AGAIN, SAID DONLON, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE (DESPITE CLOSE AND FREQUENT POLICE LIAISON) TO SUPPORT THE SUGGESTION THAT THE SOUTH WAS PROVIDING SAFEHAVEN. "UNTIL THERE IS EVIDENCE, THE GOI WISHES PEOPLE LIKE MR. MASON WOULD NOT MAKE SUCH ALLEGATIONS".

4. THIRD, MASON ALLEGED THAT "MANY OF (THE IRA'S) WEAPONS COME THROUGH THE REPUBLIC". DONLON STATED FLATLY THAT THE GOI HAS NO EVIDENCE FROM BRITISH AUTHORITIES THAT THE WEAPONS HAVE REACHED NORTHERN IRELAND THROUGH THE REPUBLIC.

5. FOURTH, MASON INTIMATED THAT THE REPUBLIC PROVIDES A SAFEHAVEN FOR TERRORISTS. ALLUDING TO IRISH CONSTITUTIONAL COMPLEXITIES THAT PREVENTED THE GOI FROM RATIFYING THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON THE EXTRADITION OF TERRORISTS, HE DETAILED STATUTORY ARRANGEMENTS WHEREBY IRISH COURTS CAN TRY TERRORISTS ARRESTED IN THE REPUBLIC FOR CRIMES COMMITTED IN NORTHERN IRELAND. QUITE NATURALLY NORTHERN IRELAND AUTHORITIES WOULD HAVE TO MAKE THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE FOR ANY SUCH TRIALS. THUS FAR, DONLON CONTINUED ONLY ONE SUCH CASE HAS BEEN BROUGHT UNDER THE CRIMINAL LAW JURISDICTION ACT. HE CONCLUDED THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT MASON'S ALLEGATIONS THAT FUGITIVE OFFENDERS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 DUBLIN 00855 01 OF 02 131320Z

FROM THE NORTH LIVE IN COMPARATIVE SAFETY IN THE REPUBLIC.

6. FIFTH, DONLON REFERRED TO THE MUCH-DISPUTED "TWO PERCENT FIGURE". (IRISH PRIME MINISTER JACK LYNCH HAD STATED AT THE FIANNA FAILPARTY CONVENTION THAT ACCORDING TO STATISTICS SUPPLIED BY THE BRITISH THEMSELVES, FEWER THAN TWO PERCENT OF THE CRIMES IN THE NORTH WERE RELATED TO THE EXISTENCE OF THE BORDER.) MASON FLATLY SAID THAT LYNCH WAS WRONG. DONLON GAVE STATISTICS FOR PREVIOUS THREE YEARS WHICH HE SAID CAME FROM A WEEKLY REPORTING SYSTEM IN WHICH THE AUTHORITIES IN THE NORTH NOTIFIED THE GOI OF ANY INCIDENTS IN WHICH THEY THOUGHT THE AFFECTED OFFENDER HAD ESCAPED ACROSS THE BORDER OR HAD CROSSED THE BORDER IN ORDER TO COMMIT A CRIME IN THE NORTH. THE AVERAGE OF ALL THREE YEARS WAS LESS THAN TWO PERCENT.

7. DONLON THEN EXPLAINED IN GREATER DETAIL THAN HAS EVER BEEN MADE PUBLIC THE SCOPE OF CROSS-BORDER SECURITY COOPERATION. SINCE 1974 THERE HAVE BEEN FOUR INTERPOLICE COMMITTEES OF THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (RUC) AND THE IRISH POLICE DEALING WITH: (A) SPEEDY AND SECURE COMMUNICATIONS; (B) BALLISTICS AND EXPLOSIVES; (C) INTELLIGENCE

EXCHANGE; AND (D) DETECTION OF SOURCES OF SUPPLY OF ARMS, AMMUNITION AND SUPPLIES. IN ADDITION THERE IS A JOINT COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS WHO WORK ON THE TRICKY PROBLEMS OF EXPLOSIVES DETONATION AND THE USE OF SUCH CHEMICALS AS FERTILIZERS AS EXPLOSIVES. DONLON COMMENTED THAT IN THESE THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS THERE HAS BEEN COMPLETE POOLING OF INFORMATION AND THE CLOSEST KIND OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO POLICE FORCES. AT THE SEPTEMBER LYNCH-CALLAGHAN MEETING BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED COMPLETE SATISFACTION WITH THE WORKINGS OF THESE COMMITTEES. NOTHING HAD BEEN FORTHCOMING FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SUBSTANTIATE MASON'S VAGUE REMARKS. FOR THEIR PART, DONLON ADDED, THE GOI IS WILLING AT ANY TIME TO DISCUSS THIS CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION AND HOW THESE COMMITTEES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 DUBLIN 00855 01 OF 02 131320Z

CAN BE MADE TO WORK BETTER.

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PAGE 01 DUBLIN 00855 02 OF 02 131318Z
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 02 OF 02 DUBLIN 00855

8. DONLON CONCLUDED THAT THE GOI'S VIEW IS THAT NO MATTER HOW GOOD SECURITY FORCES ARE, TRUE SECURITY CAN ONLY ULTIMATELY BE ACHIEVED IN A POLITICAL CONTEXT. "THERE HAS TO BE A POLITICAL POLICY TO PARALLEL THE SECURITY POLICY. MR. LYNCH STATED OUR POLITICAL POLICY IN HIS SPEECH TO THE PARTY CONVENTION LAST MONTH, AND HE

IS STATING IT AGAIN IN A BRIEF BRITISH TELEVISION INTER-
VIEW TODAY." (SEPTTEL). MORE DETAILED MEMCON BEING
POUCHED. SHANNON

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